



IMMIGRATION

AND THE

**"WHITE
AUSTRALIA"
POLICY**

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Introduction

NOW that we are approaching the end of the war Immigration problems assume an importance that calls for a thorough re-examination of Australia's point of view.

It is beyond dispute that Australia needs a more numerous population. Japanese aggression has made this crystal clear. A mere seven million people on this continent leaves us wide open to invasion. But it is not only from the angle of defence that we need more people. The further economic development of Australia, expansion of industry and trade, while not wholly dependent on population increase, will be greatly influenced by it.

Over the last two decades the birthrate, due largely to economic reasons, has seriously declined. According to the experts our population may soon be stationary if the present decline in the birthrate continues. Obviously, measures are necessary to help stimulate the natural increase of population, but, in addition, immigration on a large scale is necessary.

The Government is already planning for large-scale assisted immigration to this country from Europe. The "White Australia" policy is being questioned by spokesmen overseas and by the more far-sighted among Australians.

What should be the attitude of the Labor Movement to these issues? Must we unthinkingly accept the old slogans and ideas, or should we make a new approach to them!

The Bruce-Page Immigration Scheme

WITH very good reason, the Labor Movement has regarded State-aided immigration schemes in the past with grave suspicion. The most recent scheme, that of the Bruce-Page Government, resulted in scores of thousands of British immigrants being brought to this country in the years 1925-30. Great numbers of them were dumped on the labor market and helped to swell the ranks of the unemployed. A concerted move was made by British and Australian capitalists, at that time, to reduce our living standards. The trade union movement, long before the 1930-32 depression, opposed the Bruce-Page Immigration Scheme on the grounds that as there were already considerable numbers of workers unemployed in this country, the bringing in of some hundreds of thousands of immigrants, most of whom were accustomed to lower wage standards than the Australian worker, could only serve to depress wages and conditions generally. This was precisely what happened. From 1928 onwards living standards and conditions of work were attacked by the employers and undermined.

The 1925-30 experience makes it essential that Immigration Schemes in the future must be related to the actual economic conditions in this country. What will be the economic conditions in the immediate post-war years? We will deal with only one aspect of this question. At the present moment there are 650,000 men and women in the armed services, and approximately 400,000 in the munitions industry. Thus, when the war ends, jobs will have to be found for about 1,000,000 men and women apart from those already in industry. We have no doubt, however, that Australia, given a correct economic policy, the expansion of industry, agriculture and trade, can provide the jobs in spite of the vastness of the undertaking.

Another aspect of the 1925-30 experience should be emphasised. The publicity for the immigration scheme in those years was in the hands of advertising firms who recklessly pictured Australia as a land flowing with milk and honey, where riches were within easy reach of everyone. Immigrants came here quite unaware of the real conditions in this country. When the disillusionment came there was bitter resentment. Between 1930-34 thousands of immigrants petitioned the British Government to repatriate them on the grounds that they had been brought here under false pretences.

Obviously, we want no more publicity stunts of that character. Intending immigrants should be truthfully informed about conditions in this country and what is expected of them.

Communist Party's Proposals

IN view of Australia's unhappy experience of assisted immigration schemes in the past we believe that in any future schemes the following conditions must be observed:

Firstly, full employment must be assured so that there will be work for demobilised servicemen and women, for the workers already in Australia and for those arriving here from overseas. It would be intolerable if thousands of immigrants were brought here, as in the 1920's, to help swell the ranks of the unemployed.

Secondly, immigrant workers, no matter what country they come from, if they enter industry or seek employment in rural occupations, must be employed at ruling wage rates and conditions. In no circumstances must they be used by unscrupulous employers to lower wage standards or worsen conditions.

Thirdly, there must be no barriers placed in the way of their joining the trade unions or participating in the economic and political activities of the labor movement.

It follows from this that if immigration, both assisted and unassisted, is to accord with employment possibilities some controls are necessary. The number of immigrants each year should be determined by the economic situation in Australia. We cannot permit unrestricted immigration. Therefore, the Communist Party believes that quotas should be established, specifying the number of immigrants from each country permitted to enter Australia in each year. The quotas to be worked out in accordance with the state of employment, with the plans of the government and private enterprise for expanding employment.

"White Australia" Policy

ANY readjustment of our views on immigration must involve discussion of the "White Australia" policy. There is no subject on which Australians are more touchy than "White Australia," a touchiness that arises from the misunderstanding created by the flood of propaganda distortion surrounding it.

It is imagined that if the "White Australia" policy were to be dropped that vast numbers of immigrants from Asia would overwhelm this country. Nothing could be more absurd. There is no "White New Zealand" policy, or "White Canada" policy, and no one ever hears of those countries being overrun by Asiatics. Both New Zealand and Canada regulate immigration without using terms that are insulting to the enslaved peoples. Can't Australia do the same?

Apart from the fact that there is no indication of any desire for mass immigration of Asiatics to Australia, we could no more permit such a thing than we could permit of a great mass immigration from Europe, or from Britain for that matter, and for the same reasons—it would endanger living standards and create unemployment and would, therefore, favor the efforts of reactionary elements to promote political and racial divisions

among the people. Mass immigration from low-wage countries in particular must be avoided.

Hence the importance of the immigration quota system, advocated by the Communist Party, as a means to effectively control the flow of immigrants from all countries in accordance with the economic conditions prevailing here in Australia. Under the quota system there could be no overwhelming flood of immigrants from Asia or anywhere else.

The "White Australia" policy is something more than an immigration restriction policy. It is an outrageous insult to our great allies in the people's war against fascism—China, India and Indonesia—because it proclaims "white" superiority. It is merely another version of the same monstrous racial theories that Hitler corrupted and debased the youth of Germany with when he told them that Germans were the "master race," the "super aryaans," fit to rule an enslaved world. The "White Australia" policy is abhorrent to our colored friends and allies. Measures to exclude Chinese from Australia in the second half of the last century were the starting point of this policy. What of China today? Australians, generally, have the greatest admiration for the gallant Chinese people who have been fighting the Japanese continuously since 1937. China's struggle was invaluable for Australia. But for the strain of those four years of war before Pearl Harbour, 1937-1941, and for the fact that large Japanese forces were tied up in China by the war of the Chinese people, Australia would have been over-run by the hordes of Japanese Imperialism. Our independence has, in large measure, been preserved by China's heroic struggle.

Should we continue to insult these great people by flaunting in their faces the "White Australia" policy which infers that they are an inferior race, that their color makes them unworthy of entering Australia?

But it is not only the past which calls for the ending of this discrimination against Asiatic people. Our future interests as a nation also demand it.

When peace comes to the Pacific again we Australians want it to be a secure and lasting peace and this means that our relations with the 450,000,000 Chinese, 400,000,000 Indians and the 70,000,000 Indonesians will be of first rate importance. These peoples are our neighbors and what they do about foreign policy, separately or in unity, will influence decisively the course of events in the Pacific. In the years to come we must expect the industrialisation of these countries and that will transform them into enormously strong powers. It is all the more important, therefore, that the friendship that has grown up during the war between our people and the Chinese, Indians and Indonesians, as well as others, should be strengthened and consolidated into a firm and lasting understanding in the peace.

The industrialisation of these under-developed parts of the world will create a vast market for goods of all kinds. Plans are

already being prepared in China for a developmental program involving four thousand million £'s in the first three or four years after the war. Indians are working on a 15 years' plan, involving expenditure of 10-15,000 millions of pounds. If we are to realise the aim of full employment in this country after the war Australia's overseas trade must be very considerably increased, and vast markets will be created in China, India and Indonesia and other colonial countries if industrialisation plans go through—markets which may well help solve the problem of the disposal of Australia's surplus goods.

The building of firm and lasting friendship, the achievement of security and the gaining of the new markets that Asia offers will not be helped by our policy of discriminating against colored peoples. One of the aims of the war is the right of peoples, whether they belong to the great or small Powers, to live in peace on the basis of freedom and equality. "White Australia," which proclaims white superiority, runs counter to this aim. We cannot continue to discriminate against people on account of color.

Mr. Beasley, Federal Attorney General, is of a different opinion to this. He claims that any criticism of the slogan "White Australia" is "non-Australian." We must, according to Mr. Beasley, go on insulting our Chinese, Indian and Indonesian allies because of their color. What excellent material to hand the Japanese to use as propaganda to create doubts and hostility in the minds of our colored allies and to split the United Nations.

Mr. Beasley, for so long associated with the Labor renegade, J. T. Lang, still adheres to Lang's isolationist policy which proved so detrimental to Australia's interests in the past. No Australian with the interest of his country at heart and who understands the urgent need for good neighborly relations as one of the essential elements of Australian foreign policy and defence would advocate adherence to a policy, or rather a slogan, which will lose friends and build up hostility and danger for us in the future.

In this matter of "White Australia," as in all other matters affecting our people, the Communist Party is pursuing a policy that is consistently Australian, that is dictated by the urgent needs of the nation. It is not us but Mr. Beasley who is advocating a non-Australian, reactionary policy.

Racial or Economic?

WHEN the Archbishop of Canterbury recently commented on the "White Australia" policy and urged a more realistic approach to our colored allies and neighbors, he received a very mixed reception in this country. Labor renegade J. T. Lang, A.W.U. bureaucrat, C. Fallon, and other Labor Right-wingers, joined with P. C. Spender, U.A.P. (Liberal) politician and the "Daily Mirror" in condemnation of the Archbishop's proposal. In one voice they reaffirmed their ardent support for the anti-

Labor "White Australia" policy. The more far-seeing Australians, however, readily recognised the need for a change in policy. But there is confusion among them also.

It was maintained by some that the reason for the "White Australia" policy was economic and not racial and that the Labor Movement, because of its desire to maintain living standards, was chiefly responsible for its introduction.

Let us be under no illusions about the "White Australia" policy: it is essentially a racial policy and not economic.

The "Daily Mirror," which never loses an opportunity to promote racial strife, was for once in its lifetime thoroughly correct when it replied to the economic argument by saying: "The White Australia policy means what it says, and that is that colored races are excluded from Australia." (D.M., 20/3/'45.)

The Chinese, Indians, Indonesians and others know that it is racial and it is futile trying to convince them otherwise. But in order to dispose of the economic argument and to correctly assess the part the working class played in the anti-Chinese agitations of the last century, we must trace the history of the "White Australia policy."

The Anti-Chinese Agitation in the Gold Years

THE agitation against Chinese immigration, which was the starting point of the "White Australia" Policy, developed towards the end of the 1850's.

The discovery of gold at the beginning of the 1850's brought the first influx of Chinese into this country. Prior to that there had been attempts, on the part of big squatters chiefly, to introduce indentured Chinese and Indian labor. As a matter of fact, during the early gold rushes, indentured Chinese laborers were brought in. They were put to work for the squatters at £1 per week but most of them ran away to the goldfields when they realised they were working for much less than was paid Australian workers.

In the ten years 1851-1861, the great gold rush years, some 700,000 immigrants came to Australia from all parts of the world, including 50,000 Chinese. The main flow of immigration was to Victoria and in 1857 the number of Chinese in that State was estimated at from 30,000 to 40,000. They came here for gold. Very few of them engaged in other pursuits. On some goldfields they constituted the majority. For instance, on the Buckland River field in Victoria, where serious riots took place, there were 700 whites and 2,000 Chinese.

We must emphasise again that the Chinese did not come to Australia to take the jobs of Australian workers, but to find gold. They left their families at home in China, expecting to return to them. Most of them returned home after the gold rushes, and the Chinese population in Australia declined to a few thousands.

What caused the riots and the anti-Chinese agitation?

The Chinese were accustomed to a lower standard of living than most of the other immigrants. They lived in Chinese communities. One of the main bones of contention, however, was that they spent very little of their gold findings in Australia. This was irksome to local businessmen who were out to get rich quick at the expense of the gold prospectors by charging prices that would make our present-day black marketeers quite envious. The business interests and newspapers pointed out that other foreign-born prospectors spent their findings, or much of it, in Australia, whereas the Chinese shipped most of theirs to China.

Then again, some of the Chinese struck it rich; they had what came to be described as "Chinaman's luck." There is nothing to show that Chinese prospectors were exceptional in this respect. However, it was sufficient for frustrated businessmen to fan the flames of hostility of unsuccessful diggers against the Chinese. Then again, the Chinese were very peaceful and harmless people and, therefore, an easy mark for the reactionary hooligan type that frequented the goldfield in considerable numbers. For instance, in the Buckland River riots about 100 hooligans attacked the Chinese settlement of some 2,000 people and drove the Chinese into the bush, burnt their living quarters and destroyed their belongings.

In the year 1857 an international incident took place that was seized upon by the local chauvinists to build up their campaign of hate. Displaying a keen sense of humor as well as a knowledge of history, some Chinese pirates, operating in Chinese waters, decided to conduct their predatory business under the British flag, the Union Jack. In due course they were caught by the Chinese authorities who seized the ship and hanged the pirates. Lord Palmerston, Premier of Britain, who was in need of a cheap victory in foreign policy as an election cry, denounced the Chinese Government's action as an insult to Britain, and British warships attacked and bombarded Canton and other Chinese ports to chastise the "yellow barbarians."

The local "patriots" thereupon whipped up the campaign against the Chinese; riots were organised, Chinese were assaulted and demands were made on the Government to prevent them from entering Australia.

Even before this incident the Victorian Government, in response to mass demand for the exclusion of the Chinese, had, in 1855, passed an Act imposing a capitation or entrance fee of £10 and restricting the number of Chinese passengers per ship to one for every 10 tons of registered tonnage. Later a residence fee of £1 monthly was imposed, subsequently reduced to £6 per year. South Australia and N.S.W., in 1858 and 1861 respectively, legislated to restrict Chinese immigration along similar lines in Victoria.

In considering this first phase of the restrictions on Chinese immigration it is clear that the movement was initiated by

business interests, in the main, supported by sections of the gold prospectors and the hooligan element. The trade union movement was virtually non-existent at this time so that the organised working class had little or nothing to do with the agitation.

The Governments of the various colonies needed little prompting to impose the restrictions. It is also significant that the British Government, in spite of treaties with China, did not object in principle to the legislation of the Australian Governments.

The Trades Union and Chinese Immigration

DURING the 1870's various attempts were made by employers in this country to break down wages and conditions by employing Chinese at low rates and inferior conditions. These attempts were resisted by the workers now organising in their trade unions. The most notable struggle was that waged by the Seamen in the year 1878. In that year the Australasian Steamship Navigation Coy., the oldest and most powerful shipping company operating in Australian waters and which held a virtual monopoly of trade on the Queensland coast, decided to introduce Chinese labor on their ships operating along the north-eastern coast of Queensland. Instead of the ruling Australian rate of wages, £8 per month, the Chinese were to be paid the magnificent sum of £2/15/-. The Seamen struck work and within a few weeks seventeen of the company's ships were idle. The Seamen claimed that if the company was permitted to get away with the plan to employ cheap Chinese labor all other shipping companies would soon follow suit and Australian seamen would either be eliminated from the ships or reduced to coolie level.

So far the Seamen were on good ground. In striking against what was obviously a move to lower living standards, they acted not only for themselves but for the workers generally. The further development of the struggle, however, took forms that were anything but good.

Denouncing the company for substituting seamen of an "alien race" for Australians, the Seamen made the issue one of Australian versus Chinese workers, thereby distorting the course and aim of the struggle.

It is worthwhile, at this stage, contrasting the attitude of the Seamen's Union today towards Chinese seamen to that of 1878. Today the Seamen's Union is actively assisting Chinese seamen, on boats entering Australian ports, to organise and secure wage increases that correspond to the prevailing rates in this country. Chinese seamen have waged a series of strikes with the sympathy and help of Australian seamen who work on the principle that by raising the level of all low wage seamen to the Australian standard and by helping them organise themselves, there is little hope of the shipping magnates reducing Australian standards.

The 1878 strike was supported by other trades union and by sections of the capitalist class as well. Protests came from all over Australia. The Queensland Government, which was not a labor government—the Labor Party did not exist then—decided to withdraw the considerable mail subsidy it allowed the shipping company. Sir Henry Parkes and other politicians and business men in N.S.W. joined in condemning the shipowners.

A compromise was finally reached whereby the company agreed to eliminate the Chinese by a gradual process, the last of them being discharged by the end of 1882.

The important feature of this struggle was the sympathetic attitude of the Government to the cause of the seamen. When the Port Kembla waterside workers were striking against the export of pig-iron to Japan in 1938 they were coerced and fought by the Federal Government as well as the shipowners, whereas, the demands of the seamen in 1878 for the exclusion of Chinese from the ships, a much more dangerous international matter than the ban on pig-iron, was regarded sympathetically and supported by the Governments of Queensland and N.S.W.

It was from the time of the seamen's strike that the working class movement, disturbed at the threat of employers using cheap coolie labor to lower our living standards, became most actively associated with the anti-Chinese agitation.

Kanaka Traffic

COINCIDING with the ferment among trade unionists at the introduction of cheap Chinese labor, agitation was growing throughout the country against the importation of indentured South Sea Islanders to Queensland. First introduced in 1863 the Kanakas were used chiefly on sugar plantations although hundreds were engaged by pastoralists. In all, about 57,000 indentured laborers were brought to Australia.

The traffic in these South Sea Islanders is one of the most discreditable pages in Australian history. Queensland employers engaged people such as the notorious "Bully" Hayes to undertake the "recruiting" of the natives who were supposed to voluntarily "contract" to work as an indentured laborer for a specified period of time. The methods used by the "recruiters" to get natives to enter into the "contract" included bribery, arson, kidnapping and murder. They were utterly callous to the sufferings of their victims. The vast majority of the natives were brought to Australia against their will or under false pretences.

Once in Australia they were little better off. They were indentured to sugar barons or squatters and treated worse than slaves. Provisions for their accommodation were disgraceful and government inspectors seemed either unwilling or unable to bring about any substantial change. Unaccustomed to the climatic and living conditions of Queensland, sickness took a terrible toll of them. Employers made little provision for medical treatment. Of the 57,000 Kanakas brought here only a few thousand ever returned to their beloved islands although a condition of their "contract" provided that after their period of indenture the employer would return them to their homes. The powerful C.S.R. got its start during this period.

The Queensland traffic in South Sea Islanders became an international disgrace and the British Government was forced to intervene. Methods of recruitment were brought more under government supervision, the Kanakas were paid £6 per year at least during their slavery and the sugar barons were expected to improve their accommodation and health facilities.

Protests against the traffic continued, however. Trade Unions, liberal organisations and public meetings demanded the cessation of the indentured labor system.

It was at this time that the term "White Australia" became prominent.

The sugar planters maintained that only black labor could grow sugar and that its abolition would cause the sugar industry to collapse.

Finally, the first Federal Parliament, in response to the pressure of the people, put an end to the Kanaka trade. Under the Act of 1901 the remaining Kanakas were to be returned to the islands by 1906. It is worthwhile noting that the sugar industry did not collapse.

The campaign for the cessation of the Kanaka traffic had a vastly different character to the anti-Chinese agitation.

The Kanakas brought here did not replace white workers. Nor did they come of their own volition. The issue, therefore, was not one of preventing the entry of the South Sea Islanders, as in the case of the Chinese, but of putting an end to the outrageous system of exploitation being practiced by sections of the capitalist class and the forced immigration of the Kanakas to Australia for this purpose.

Why "White Australia?"

ALTHOUGH the workers, from economic motives in the main, participated in the agitation against both the Chinese and the Kanaka trade, it was the ruling classes who took the initiative to restrict the immigration of colored people. "White Australia" is their policy, in their interests. The extent to which the working class movement has embraced "White Australia" is nothing more than an indication of the degree of employer class influence in the labor movement.

Why did the capitalist class introduce the "White Australia" policy?

Were they concerned with preserving the living standards of the Australian workers? If so, why have they, at every opportunity, sought to reduce wages and to attack the trade unions?

They were not influenced by economic motives when they foisted the "White Australia" policy on this country. The support of the ruling classes for "White Australia" was not the result of sympathy for the workers or any desire to protect them. There are other factors to be considered.

In the "History of the White Australia Policy," Myra Willard writes:

"The fundamental reason for the adoption of the White Australia Policy is the preservation of a British-Australian Nationality." (p. 189.)

Australia, peopled with British stock, is situated close to the Asiatic world, with its teeming millions of people, and the ruling classes of Britain and Australia have always been afraid that the admission of Asiatics would "Submerge our Anglo-Saxondom." (History of the White Australia Policy.)

The White Australia Policy might be described as Australia's "Monroe Doctrine"—its object the preservation of the British-Australian nationality. It is not for nothing that we are constantly told that "Australia is more British than the British."

"The White Australia Policy goes down to the roots of our national existence, the roots from which the British social system has sprung," said Alfred Deakin, Prime Minister of Australia, in 1903.

From the standpoint of British Imperialism, it was of decisive importance that Australia should be built up and strengthened as a bastion of Empire, as a "White" Outpost of British Imperialism in the Pacific. The main centre of the British Colonial world stretched across the north of Australia, from India in the west, through Malaya and the British interests in China, to the Pacific Islands in the east.

The ruling class was fully conscious of the role Australia was expected to play as junior partner to British imperialism in the Pacific, as will be seen from the following statement by Senator Stanford, in the Parliamentary debates on White Australia, at the end of 1901. He said: . . . "Speaking from the imperial point of view, nothing could tend to solidify and strengthen the Empire so much as that we should build up in these southern lands a British race."

This policy of building up in Australia a "British race" and of "solidifying and strengthening the Empire," which is the essence of "White Australia," runs through the various statements of Governments of this country right down to the present day. Thus Mr. Bruce, Prime Minister of Australia, in a statement on June 23, 1926, after describing the White Australia policy as "Fundamental and vital" to Australia, went on to say: "Australia was an undeveloped country, and economically the eyes of the world were upon it. They had to be in a position which was unchallengeable, to have a national aspiration, and with that to maintain the British character of the Australian people. Australia was 98% British and was determined to remain so." (The "Age," Melbourne, 25/6/28.)

On May 8th, 1944, Mr. Curtin, who was attending the Empire Conference in London, in a broadcast to the people, said: "The Australian people stood as the trustees for the people of Britain, for everything for which free people everywhere stand. Today he could say with just pride that that trusteeship had been carried out honorably and successfully."

The British ruling class fully endorsed the policy of building Australia as a "British race" so that this country might stand as "trustees" for British, as well as Australian, interests in the Pacific, and the only suggestion they made to the Immigration legislation passed here was that the wording of the Restriction laws should be set out in less objectionable language. The British Government drew the attention of the Australian Governments to the fact that by passing Acts that specifically discriminated against the Chinese, as was done here in the earlier legislation, was not judicious, as it might be resented by the Chinese Government. So the Australian Governments altered the words "Chinese" to "Asiatics." This did not suit the British Authorities either, who were faced with protests from China, Japan and India. Hence, when the first Commonwealth Government was framing its Immigration Restriction Act, the British Government suggested that instead of naming any nation or race, the Government should make provision for a dictation test, in any European language, to be given any immigrant the Government wished to

exclude, as this would serve the purpose as well and could not be objected to by other countries. The proposal was adopted and so we have the dictation test which (a subsequent alteration provided for this) can be given today in any language the authorities choose, if they wish to exclude any immigrant. It will be recalled that the dictation test was used by Mr. Menzies, Attorney-General in the Lyons Government, in an attempt to exclude Kisch and Griffin from this country when they came here to attend the Australian Congress against War and Fascism, at the end of 1934. Griffin, a New Zealander, was given a dictation test in Dutch, and Kisch in Gaelic. Hence, it is a measure to be used against the labor movement as well as aliens.

Conclusion

FROM the foregoing it should be clear that the "White Australia" policy was not the result of working class activity, although the labor movement participated in the agitation. It arose from the fundamental needs and theory of the Australian capitalist class. It is imperialistic and chauvinistic in conception and content. When the working men and women last century engaged in the anti-Chinese agitation, it was because they felt the need to protect their economic conditions and standards, which they considered were in danger of being swept away. Owing to the immaturity of the labor movement, to the lack of a socialist outlook and of working class theory, they were easily swept in behind the chauvinist agitation and racial policy of the capitalist class. The employer class in this country were not greatly upset when the workers struck work for the exclusion of the Chinese from the ships. This was one strike in Australian history in which, amazingly enough, the Government supported the action of the strikers. They were not disturbed by the strike because it was in their interest to set the working class of one nationality or race against those of another. Divide and conquer has ever been a capitalist weapon against the working class. They wanted, also, to have the support of the working class for their reactionary "White Australia" policy. Nothing could have been more dangerous for the ruling classes than that Chinese and Australian workers should make common cause, as they are doing today, and instead of fighting each other join forces and fight reactionary employers.

The penetration of chauvinism into the Labor Movement is shown by the "White Australia" policy of the Labor Party, by the fact that the renegade, J. T. Lang, and various leaders of the Labor Party give vent to utterances similar to Mr. Bruce, W. M. Hughes, and other representatives of British and Australian Imperialism. On the issue of "White Australia" there is nothing separating the most reactionary of the capitalist class from the Right-wing of the Labor Party.

The trade unionists of this country, under the influence of the Communist Party, have already taken up a new position on the issue of "White Australia." As far back as 1927-28, the affiliation of the A.C.T.U. and the N.S.W. Trades and Labor Council to the Pan-Pacific T.U. Secretariat, a body with which was affiliated the trade unions of countries bordering on the Pacific, including China, Soviet Russia and Japan, marked the new policy of the trade unions which was toward understanding and international T.U. collaboration. But it was from the time of the Japanese attack on China in 1937 that the main advance was made. The workers of Australia were the first in this country to understand that the fight of the Chinese people was our fight, that the defeat of China would seal our fate. In 1938 this feeling found popular expression in the struggle at Port Kembla against the export of pig-iron to Japan. The modern Australian unionist was making amends for the mistakes of the early trade unionists.

The Indian, Chinese and Indonesian workers are organising their trade unions not only for the fight to defeat Japan but for democracy, economic security and a lasting peace.

The Australian trade unions must make contact with these trade union movements, reach understanding with them and ensure that the voice of the working class will be heard in the making of policy in the Pacific. Working class internationalism must replace the narrow isolationist nationalism that has so influenced Australian trade union thinking in the past.

The people of India, China and Indonesia will play a far more important role in Pacific and world affairs when the war ends than before. Big changes have been brought about by the war. We Australians have worked and fought side by side with our colored allies in the war against fascism and learned to admire them.

In the coming peace we must strengthen and develop this friendship in the interests of lasting peace and security.

Racial discrimination can do nothing but harm to Australia. The "White Australia" policy must go. We must associate with our colored allies in the peace, as in war, as equals.

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